

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus comprising:

image generation means for generating a plurality of images which are sequential and arranged spirally, based on input image data, and for generating the plurality of images such that an image at a second time point is larger than an image at a first time point;

image display control means for controlling the display of the plurality of images generated, independent of an image data source;

focus setting means for setting a focus on an image positioned at a focus area surrounded by a frame, among the plurality of images displayed,

wherein when an image that is presently focused is ahead of the input image data, the image generation means generates a dummy image for a display area that is before the presently focused image; and

wherein the value of maximum number of images that are allowed to be arranged spirally is displayed with the plurality of images,

wherein said image is enlarged until an image becomes equal to or larger than a predetermined value which renders the image gradually transparent in view of said plurality of images displayed,

wherein said image is switched to a display of a child screen when the image becomes equal to or larger than said predetermined value,

wherein the plurality of images are arranged such that elapsed time is depicted and the images gradually fade toward the center of the spiral from the outer circumferential side such that background images are visible, and

wherein the focus area is maintained at a fixed position during the operation of the focus setting means; and

selection means for selecting an image set by the focus setting means, independent of the image data source;

wherein the plurality of images are index images which are respectively selected from scenes of one program, and the image display control means displays the program of the selected index image.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the first point is a future time point with respect to the second time point, and

the image generation means makes the image display control means display the plurality of images such that the image at the first time point is situated in a more inner circumferential side of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images than the image at the second time point, among the plurality of images arranged spirally.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein the image generation means makes the image display control means display the plurality of images such that the image at the first time point is displayed more faded than the image at the second time point, among the plurality of images arranged spirally.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein the image generation means makes a frame having a predetermined size be displayed at a predetermined position on the image display control means, and moves the plurality of images spirally displayed, with respect to the frame, in response to input operation of an operation input.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 4,
wherein the image generation means moves the plurality of images arranged spirally, in a radial direction of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 4,
wherein the image generation means moves the plurality of image spirally arranged, in a substantially circumferential direction of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein the image display control means generates a background image which radially spreads from a center of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images, and makes the image display control means display the background image.

10. (Currently Amended) An information providing method comprising:
an image generation step of generating a plurality of images which are sequential and arranged spirally, based on input image data, and of generating the plurality of images such that an image at a second time point is larger than an image at a first time point;
an image display control step of controlling the display of the plurality of images generated, on image display control means, independent of an image data source;
a focus setting step of setting a focus on an image positioned at a focus area surrounded by a frame, among the plurality of images displayed,
enlarging said image until the image becomes equal to or larger than a predetermined value which renders the image gradually transparent in view of said plurality of images displayed, and
switching said image to a display of a child screen when the image becomes equal to or larger than said predetermined value,
wherein when an image that is presently focused is ahead of the input image data, the image generation step generates a dummy image for a display area that is before the presently focused image; and

wherein the value of maximum number of images that are allowed to be arranged spirally is displayed with the plurality of images, and

wherein the focus area is maintained at a fixed position during the focus setting step; and

a selection step of selecting an image set by the focus setting means, independent of the image data source;

wherein the plurality of images are arranged such that elapsed time is depicted and the images gradually fade toward the center of the spiral from the outer circumferential side such that background images are visible, and

wherein the plurality of images are index images which are respectively selected from scenes of one program, and the image display control means displays the program of the selected index image.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10,

wherein the first point is a future time point with respect to the second time point, and

in the image generation step, the plurality of images are displayed such that the image at the first time point is situated in a more inner circumferential side of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images than the image at the second time point, among the plurality of images arranged spirally.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10,

wherein in the image generation step, the plurality of images are displayed such that the image at the first time point is displayed more faded than the image at the second time point, among the plurality of images arranged spirally.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10,

wherein the image generation step includes a display step of generating a frame having a predetermined size and of displaying the frame at a predetermined position on the image display control means, and a movement step of moving the plurality of images spirally arranged, with respect to the frame, in response to input operation of an operation input.

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein in the image generation step, the plurality of images arranged spirally are moved in a radial direction of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13,

wherein in the image generation step, the plurality of image spirally arranged are moved in a substantially circumferential direction of a spiral constructed by the plurality of images.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10,
wherein the image generation step includes a background image generation step
of generating a background image which radially spreads from a center of a spiral constructed by
the plurality of images.